

What is EfM at St. Bart's?
EfM = Education for Ministry
(Exploring Faith Matters - Education/Exploration for Meaning)

EfM at St. Bart's 2022-23 is full. Enrollment for 2023-24 starts in June 2023.

EfM is a program in practical theology.

EfM'ers encounter Christian tradition and bring it into conversation with their experiences of the world through study, spiritual practice, theological reflection, and personal discernment ... in community. EfM meets weekly in small, mentored groups. EfM offers a framework for growing in faith, for understanding what life is about, who and whose we are, and how to authentically translate Christian faith into action, into one's own way of doing and being in the world.

EfM at St. Bart's is an invitation into sacred space, time and community for:

- ***Learning and context*** -- We study Christian tradition, meaning the Bible, Church doctrine and history, Christian theology and ethics, and some of the Jewish tradition that is their foundation.
- ***Worship*** -- We pray together. We explore different prayer approaches and spiritual practices.
- ***Exploration of faith, beliefs and spirituality*** -- We study teachings and voices, primarily in the Christian tradition reflect deeply upon what we personally hold as our own.
- ***Theological Reflection ("TR")*** -- We develop skills to reflect theologically on scripture, culture, world events, personal experiences and personal beliefs and opinions, and more. TR serves to "connect the dots" between our faith/beliefs and our choices/actions in everyday life, and aids in personal discernment. It's a life skill for seeing and doing through the eyes of faith, of "faith seeking understanding."
- ***Conversation and sharing stories (including Spiritual Autobiographies) with a mutual covenant of confidentiality.***
- ***Asking questions and seeking answers for yourself.***
- ***Ministry (translating faith into action for good in the world)*** -- Christians are called to serve the world according to our gifts. The work of EfM can help you determine what "ministry" means for you with your gifts, whether it be a particular type of work or service, "merely" a way of being in the world, finding a place where "your great gladness and the world's deep hunger meet," or _____ ?
- ***Transformation*** -- EfM'ers dare to imagine, grow, and be changed.
- ***EfM meets weekly*** on Wednesdays for 36 weeks of Lessons. EfM 2022-23 meets Sep 14 - May/early June in person 3 weeks/month at St. Bart's, 1 week/month on Zoom 6:00-8:30pm.

When can I start?

- **St. Bart's EfM 2023-24 enrollment starts in June 2023. Watch St. Bart's eNews for notices.**
- A few groups (not at St. Bart's) may still have space for this year or starting in January 2023. Some of meet only via Zoom or otherwise online.

Understanding EfM and whether it's right for you is best done through conversation.

EfM Mentor Liza Page Nelson at lnelson@stbarts.org would be happy to speak with you.

No need to wait to talk about EfM to learn more or to sign up to be alerted for the next enrollment.

For more about EfM at St. Bart's, visit <https://stbarts.org/grow-landing-page//adult-education>

For general EfM program info, visit <https://theology.sewanee.edu/education-for-ministry/about/>

Tell me more about the EfM program

Education for Ministry (EfM) is a four-year program, but people commit for one year at a time. New EfM'ers must start with Year One of the program. You can take breaks, stopping and re-starting later. There's no penalty for not completing any year or all years. If you need to, you can continue the program by transfer to another group. If someone starts and determines "not for me" or "not now," partial refunds or credit may be available, depending on the timing.

EfM is a distance-learning certificate program of The University of the South: Sewanee School of Theology. Sewanee develops and designs materials and curriculum, and trains and accredits the Mentors who lead the groups. EfM groups operate in nearly every diocese of The Episcopal Church and online, with participants from around the country and the globe. Since its inception in 1975, more than 120,000 people have participated in the program.

The curriculum for the EfM year has 36 "Lessons". Groups typically start in September and end by early June. Some start in January, break for summer, and conclude by calendar year end. All EfM groups meet in seminars of 6 to 12 participants and 1-2 Mentors, with all EfM program years meeting together, like a one room schoolhouse.

No papers, no tests, no grades, and no penalty for not doing the week's "homework." People are encouraged to come and participate even if they haven't done the week's work.

Groups break as agreed for holidays and may double up a few lessons or add a week to stay on schedule.

Far More than Bible Study!

EfM program Years One and Two center on the Bible, and all four Years are steeped in the Word. But EfM is more than Bible study. EfM'ers must be prepared to engage their hearts as well as their minds. People often choose to share personal insights, feelings, and experiences in confidence within the group.

The readings are only "half" of EfM. The other half is taking the journey together, and over time transforming into a community. This happens in conversation and prayer, in sharing stories, thoughts, doubts, concerns, questions and insights. It happens by honoring where we are similar and where we are different. It happens through regular presence and participation. The more you put into EfM, the more you get out of it.

The work of EfM deepens the connection between people's faith and their lives; it assists them to discover and nurture their call to service, to put their faith into action.

EfM is a program for laypeople. It is also a prerequisite for the Diaconate in the Episcopal Diocese of New York, among many other dioceses.

Current Fees and Costs An annual fee of \$330 covers program costs and each year's EfM "Reading and Reflection" study guide. Reduced program fees and partial scholarships may be available to some for whom the fee poses a barrier. Participants purchase their own program texts and Bible (the New Revised Standard Version strongly recommended.) The total cost of books depends on format (paperback, hardcover, e-reader) and whether the book is new, used or rented. Estimated current costs can be provided upon request.